THE GENEROSITY OF Christian Love:

With some Reflexions upon that Sordid

SELF-LOVE

That now governs the World, and is the Great Incendiary in the Church and Commonwealth.

Delivered in a

SERMON

To a Rural Congregation, and now published at the request of some cordially devoted to the present Establishment.
With some Additions in the Applicatory Part thereof.

By WILLIAM GOULD,
A Son of the Church of England.

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THE GENEROSITY OF CHRISTIAN LOVE.

I. Corinth. XIII. verſ. 5.

——Charity ſeeketh not her own.

TO ſuffer for our Countrey, or our Friends, was eſteemed ſo Heroically Generous among the Ancient Heathens, that *Epictetus* forbids men in ſuch caſes to conſult the Oracle, it being neceſſary to be done, whether Succeſs or Ruine be the Conſequence. To ſave a Friend ready to periſh we find * *Epiſthenes* ready to lay down his life. *Artabates* perfectly hated his own Life as ſoon as *Cyrus* had loſt his. ‖ *Lucius Petronius* would not outlive

* *Zenophon* in Exp. *Cyri*, l. 7. p 319. 209. ibid.
‖ *Valerius Max.* l. 4. c. 7. p. 127, 128.

live his Friends. *Pomponius* and *Lætorius* died Martyrs for *Caius Gracchus*; and *Terentius* prefers above his own the life of *Brutus*. Thus acted the *Cymbrians* and *Celtiberians* in *Valerius Maximus*, the *Athenians* in *Thucydides*, the *Megalopolitans* in *Polybius*, and the many Societies mustered up by *Alexander ab Alexandro*, who had all things in common, as well Sufferings as Enjoyments. *Licurgus*, to perpetuate to his Citizens the benefit of his good Laws, as subtilly designed his own Banishment, as men now ambitiously aim at Crowns and Scepters. *Codrus* with his own death redeems the Safety of his Army. *Curtius* made himself a Martyr for his Countrey, and *Socrates* for his God: yet the publick Soul of *Socrates* hath not struck him out of the List of the Philosophers, but he stands there the more conspicuous in his Bloudy Characters. The same Truth in a higher measure our Christianity teacheth us: *Charity seeketh not her own*; that is, not her own to the prejudice of the Publick Interest, as *Cornelius à Lapide* and *Estius* upon the Text: not her own, so as to neglect the weal of others, as our Apostle (being his own Expositor) explains himself, *Phil.*2.4.

Pomponius ibid. Ibid. 129. *Terentius*, &c. *Quintus Curtius* l.7.211. *Thucydides* l. 2. p. 124, 125. *Polybius* l.2. p. 147. *Alex. ab Alex.* Dier. Genial. l. 1.c.26,75,&c.

In the Words we have considerable, 1. A Duty supposed and taken for granted, as always requisite, and that is *Love*. 2. The generous Character of this Grace or Vertue, *It seeketh not her own*. Of both in order.

I begin with the Grace or Duty it self, *Love*. This is that excellent Grace which hath so many and such ample Commendations in the Gospel of Christ. It is called, *the bond of perfectness*, *Col.* 3.14.

As

As the Body joyned with and animated by the Soul perfects the Man, so Piety enlivened with Love completes Religion; so *Erasmus*. Charity is a Collection of all Good things into one, that which gives to all other Vertues their goodness and perfection; so interprets *Clarius*. The most perfect bond, because Love is the Conjunction of Souls, and the Soul is the perfection of the Creatures; so the excellently learned *Grotius*. The bond whereby all the Members of the Church are perfectly united together, and do shew one to another all due and brotherly Affection; or the bond which tyes all the Vertues together, and perfects them; so others. Charity (which is a transcript of Christs love to us) is a Conspiration or meeting together of all the Graces, or an obligation to all imaginable Vertues. Thus you see what a Grace Love is, how indispensible a duty, which gives life to all our Actions and performances. *Though I speak with the tongues of Men and Angels, and have not charity, I am but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal*; so our Apostle in this very Chapter of the Text, verse the first. Could I speak like an Angel exquisitely, and divinely, and God-like: had I that great variety of the Tongues which the Angels may or have used when sent to deliver messages to men of divers Regions, Countries, and Languages: had I the Angelical Faculty of expressing my Conceptions to others, as the Angels have, which serves them to that use as the Tongue does to us; yet without Love I were useless to the Church; so others upon the place.

Erasmus inter Criticos.

Inter Criticos.

Inter Criticos.

Dr. *Hammond* on the Place.

Drusius.

Assembly Notes.

Catarinus.
Grotius.
Clarius.

Had

See Dr. Hammond, Grotius, Paræus, Calvin, Cajetan. cum multis aliis.

Had I the tongues of Men and Angels, and have not Love, I were as ſounding braſs or a tinkling cymbal: that is, if I ſpake the 25 Languages of a *Mithridates*, or could thunder in an Oration, as *Ariſtophanes* ſaid of *Pericles*; move the Mountains and Rocks with *Orpheus*; carry the People up and down the Countrey like Pitchers by the ears, as *Socrates* did *Alcibiades* by his Eloquence; had I the [illegible] and [illegible], the double Deity of *Demoſthenes*, the Silver Trumpet of *Hilary*, or the Golden Mouth of *Chryſoſtom*, of whom it was ſaid by the Ancients, *Better the Sun did not ſhine than Chryſoſtom not preach*: Could I with *S. Peter* adde 3000 to the Church at one onely Sermon or Diſcourſe; or (as it was ſaid of our Countryman *Bede* in an Hyperbolical ſtrain) make the Stones applaud and ſay *Amen, Beda Venerabilis*: Could I ſpeak like *Plato*, of whom it was ſaid, *If Jupiter ſhould ſpeak Greek, he would uſe no other phraſe but his*: or as the People of *Herod*, *The voice of God, not of a Man*; yet *without charity I am nothing*; *I am but as ſounding braſs or a tinkling cymbal.* Like a Trumpet ſounding a Triumph for Vanity and Oſtentation, (ſo Dr. *Hammond*) which makes a hideous noiſe without any pleaſantneſs: or like an Inſtrument out of tune, which grates the Hearers, or gives at leaſt an uncertain ſound, without any diſtinction of its Notes. Thus I make an empty inſignificant noiſe without this Grace of Love, the great bond of perfections.

Calvin & Paræus.

Grotius, Vatablus, Aſſembly.

It follows Verſe 2. of this Chapter, *If I have all myſteries and all knowledge*, a perſpicacity and acuteneſs in Spirituals, the gift of expounding Scripture and all its myſterious parts, *occulta Divinitatis*, all

Dr. *Hammond.* *Aquinas in loc.*

the

the depths and secrets of Divinity, and all Knowledge either acquired or infused: If I could unveil all the Old Testament Types and Figures, and were endued with all Historical Knowledge; so interprets *Grotius*; All the Principles of Religion divinely revealed in the Word: And *if I had all faith, so as to remove mountains*, all the degrees of Miraculous Faith, (as it is generally expounded) so as to be *able to say unto this mountain, Be thou cast into the sea, Mat.*17.20. for such a Faith may be without either love to God or our Neighbours; and Christ shall say unto such that cast out Devils in his name, *I know ye not*: If they have not the Gospel-love, 'tis not all their Miraculous Faith can avail to preserve them in the Day of Judgment. *Paræus.* See *Calvin, Grotius, Paræus, Clarius,* Eng. Annot. *Cajetan, Aquinas, Chrysostom, Theophylact, Euthymius.*

It follows, *If I give all my goods to feed the poor, and yield my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing*: that is, (say Expositors generally) If I give Alms like a Pharisee, out of Vain Glory and Ostentation rather than out of Sincerity of Love and Commiseration of the Brethren; if I give all I have onely to feed upon Vulgar Air; if I relieve and love not, feed the Hungry to get Honour to my self; if I consult my Fame and Credit with men above the Obligation of the Divine Precept; should I thus give away all my Estate (without Charity) it were fruitless and insignificant: or should I be roasted on a Gridiron with S. *Laurence*, suffer Martyrdom, which is the utmost of Christian Courage; yet if done out of an indiscreet Zele, an undue end, and not out of a Principle of Love, aiming wholly at Gods Glory and Verse 3. *Grotius*, Dr. *Hammond, Calvin, Paræus*, Eng. Notes, *Aquinas. Aquinas, Calvin, Maldonate, Paræus*, Dr. *Hammond.*

my Neighbours Good, and the Benefit of the Church of God, it profits nothing as to my Eternal Salvation. Thus Love is that Heroick Grace that makes all we do profitable to our selves, and to God an Acceptable Sacrifice.

Generality of Expositors.

Next follows the Acts of this excellent Grace, from the 4th. to the 10th. verse; which because it relates so much to the *encomium* of this Grace, (never enough to be admired) I shall very briefly paraphrase and explain, and beg your Attentions.

Dr. *Hammond*, *Grotius*, *Drusius*, *Clavius*, *Vatablus*.

Charity suffers long and is kind. It tolerates with equanimity the malice of repeated Injuries, and is full of Humanity and Sweetness. The Heats of Love are calm as Sunshine; such as do not consume but cherish. Love shews a Pleasantness of Humour and Conversation during Injuries and Contumelies, (so S. *Ambrose*;) during the greatest Affront it entertains a tenderness of Compassion and a real Kindness. It is the property of Love to infuse a God-like Benignity into our natures: *God is love*, saith S. *John*; and Love is so far like God at least, as to be long-suffering and gracious.

Eng. Annot.

Dr. *Hammond* & *Pareus*.

Again; *Charity envieth not.* It is not tortured at the Felicity of others, but delights in their Prosperity as if it happened even to our selves. He that hath this Gospel-love does not grow fat by my leanness, is not consumed at the prospect of my Splendour and Happiness. He does not weep when I rejoyce; nor does my Sleep break the Charitable mans rest. He is not his own Tormentor and Torment (with the Envious) at the Good of others; so the Generality of Commentators.

Again,

Again, *Charity vaunteth not it self.* Love does nothing preposterously. The *Greek* word περπερεύεται some derive from the *Latine perperàm*, and then it is of a very large Signification; *Charity does nothing rashly or amiss.* *Cajetan, Catarinus, Clarius, Vatablus, Theophylact, Aquinas.*

Others derive it *à perperis fratribus procacissimis*: that is, Love does nothing scornfully or vain-gloriously. It does not vainly put forth it self. Its demeanour towards others is neither insolent nor imperious: it does not rush into any precipitous (rash) actions, to gratifie Vain-glory, or any Intemperate Humours whatsoever. Thus Charity is Modesty, *is not puffed up*; that is, doth not arrogantly boast its Gifts, Graces, or Perfections; it makes men in lowliness of mind *esteem all others better than themselves.* Its language is not, *Come not near me, I am holier than thou*: but, *Less than the least of all Saints, and the greatest of sinners.* Its style is, *Less than the least of all thy mercies.* Love hath no elation of mind at the consideration of the most glorious Priviledges and Accomplishments; *does not behave itself unseemly*, useth no man indecently in speech, gestures, or actions; does not demean it self Cynically or churlishly, does nothing either uncomely or dishonest; observes a due *decorum* in all cases, and gives no scandal or just cause of offence. It will debase it self to the meanest Offices to effect a real kindness. It keeps men from all irregular behaviour, especially in the Church; so Dr. *Hammond* interprets ἀσχημονεῖ by εὐσχημόνως, 1 *Cor.* 14. 40. Comeliness and Decency always attend upon Christian Charity. *Hesychius, Cornelius à Lapide, Erasmus, Casaubon, Calvin*, Dr. *Hammond*, Eng. Notes. Dr. *Hammond & Grotius.* *Grotius, Zegerus, Vatablus*, Eng. Notes. *Erasmus & Paræus.* Dr. *Hammond* on the place.

Catarinus, Cajetan, Aquinas, Dr. Hammond, and others.

Again, *Love is not easily provoked:* not easily exasperated to a revenge. It is not for a speedy Retaliation of Violence upon Oppressors. It permits not in men any immoderate Heats upon the most barbarous provocations; but is slow to wrath, and of such an excellent spirit, as is uncapable of any quick resentment of Injuries; never makes a man angry without cause, and keeps a due measure where there is a just cause of being angry, as there always is where Gods Glory is concerned.

Grotius.

See Dr. *Hammond* on the place.

Erasmus, Cajetan, Vatablus, Valla, Clarius.

Love thinketh no evil: free from all mischievous designs; or else imputes no evil to any mans prejudice or disadvantage. To which agrees the several Glosses in *Hesychius* upon the word in the Text. And this advanceth Charity to the highest pitch: whereas the other Exposition of Not designing mischief, was so consonant to the Laws of Humanity, that it was practised by the Heathens themselves. Others read, *thinketh no evil*; that is, entertains no ill suspicions, harbours no ill thoughts or jealousies of others; gives no hasty credit to Report, but candidly interprets and construes in the best sense in all doubtful cases. In short; Love plots no revenge, imputes no wickedness, entertains no evil suspicions, with reference to our Neighbours.

Aquinas, Catarinus.

Grotius,

Eng. Notes.

Rejoyceth not in iniquity, but in the truth. Rejoyceth not at the Impieties of men; is so far from joy, that it truly grieves at all Iniquity, whether National or Personal, Universal or Particular. It insults not on the unjustly oppressed, not pleased with any deceit or cozenage in it self or others.

Paræus.

Chrysostome

When

When a man is once acquitted, it congratulates his Discharge and Innocence; rejoyceth at the righteousness of the righteous. *Clarius & Drusius. Cameron.*

Charity beareth all things. The Original στέγει signifies to bear up as a Pillar does the Roof, and implies the supporting of a weak Brother under his many infirmities; and differs from ὑπομένει, at the last clause of the 7th. Verse; for this relates to the patient enduring of what is offered to our selves, and the other to the weakness of others. Eng. Notes. *Ibidem.*

Beareth all things; even Death and Torments for the sake of Christ Jesus, and to promote the Interest of his Church. It conceals the evils of an Erring Brother, in all such cases wherein it is not a greater Charity to reveal it. Refuseth no Hardships, as expecting eternal happiness. Some construe it by *Rom.* 15. 1. *by bearing the infirmities of the weak*; and not pleasing our selves and others. The bearing all afflictions without any trouble or consternation, or dejectedness of Spirit, or any passionate Entertainments. *Clarius. Dr. Hammond, Catarinus, Aquinas.*

Charity believeth all things: all things credible, and not apparently false: not relating to Faith in a Religious, but a Civil sense; as Faith is the bond of Humane Societies. Others read, *Love puts a good construction upon things*, will not rashly condemn any man of a Lie, but credits all things which it hath the least ground to believe, either in Charity or by the rules of Justice. Credits all things possible or probable. Believes all that it can give credit to with a safe and an upright Conscience. *Paræus.* Dr. *Hammond*, and *Grotius* on the place. *Catarinus, Drusius.*

Paræus, Grotius, Dr. *Hammond.*

Charity hopeth all things: all things to be hoped for respecting God, our selves, or our Neighbours. Despairs of none, but hopes, expects, and desires his Reformation and Repentance. Never gives over any probable means to reclaim an Erring Brother from any evil courses. Hopes for all the Good things consonant with Gods mercy in Christ, expects the accomplishment of all Gods Promises, and hopes all Good of its Neighbours, even its Enemies.

Cajetan, Aquinas, Catarinus, Eng. Notes.

Calvin.

Endureth all things: quæ ferenda sunt, & eo quo decet modo. It endures all things tolerable as becometh Christians. Is not discouraged with Relapses and Repetitions of Injuries, but expects better things even of its very Persecutors. Endures much pain and loss to procure a greater good to others, than the evil we suffer herein as to our selves. So endures with a Christian patience, as even to study peace and reconciliation with the most barbarously injurious. More willing to suffer the greatest than offer the least injuries. Suffering every thing that may promote Gods Glory, the Truth of the Gospel, and the Interest of all Christians.

Grotius.

Dr. *Hammond.*

Paræus, Eng. Notes.

Lastly, Charity never fails in the next world. Love is an Ingredient in our Happiness. We apprehend by Faith, and expect by Hope, that we may enjoy by perfect Love. When all Gifts fail, and Prophecies cease, and Tongues vanish, Charity still remains, and is at the very height of Perfections. To summe up briefly therefore all the Excellencies of Charity: *Love suffers long*, so 'tis Longanimity; *is kind*, so 'tis Courtesie; *vaunteth not it self*, so 'tis Modesty; *is not puffed up*, so Love is Humility; *seeketh not her own*, so 'tis Equity; *is not easily*

ſily provoked, ſo 'tis Lenity; *does not behave it ſelf unſeemly*, ſo 'tis Decency; *rejoyceth in the truth*, ſo 'tis Verity; *thinketh no evil*, ſo Love is Simplicity; *beareth all things*, ſo it is Patience; *believeth all things*, ſo 'tis Faith; *hopeth all things*, ſo 'tis Chriſtian Confidence; *endureth all things*, and never fails, ſo 'tis Conſtancy and Perſeverance. All which I have interpreted from the beſt Critical and Practical Commentators. And ſo much of the Duty it ſelf, *Love*. Paſs we next to the Generoſity of this Vertue, *It ſeeketh not her own*. Upon which I have chiefly fixed my preſent Meditations.

And here two things are conſiderable: Firſt, the Excluſion, and ſo conſequentially Condemnation, of the ſordid purſuit of our Private Ends, without any conſideration of the Publick Intereſt. Secondly, hereby is included the Love of others, even our Enemies. Of both which with brevity and plainneſs; and theſe two take in the whole of what is obſerved by any Expoſitors.

I. As to the Odiouſneſs of Self-love hereby excluded, and condemned as barbarous. This I ſhall ſpeak to under 5 Heads or Particulars.

1. Self-love is oppoſite to the Law and Light of Nature.

2. To the Practice of Gods beſt Saints in all Ages of his Church.

3. Self-love dares not appear in its own Colours.

4. It is oppoſite to the two Articles, *the holy Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints.*

5. Laſtly, repugnant to our Saviours Doctrine and Practice. Of which briefly.

1. We

1. We begin with Natures Law and Practice. The Sun in the Firmament does not monopolize its Beams, nor engroſs its Light, but ſcatters them abroad, and gilds the whole World, ſhining more for others than it ſelf. The Fountain binds not in its Streams, but is communicatively fluent, and ſpends it ſelf with a continual bubling forth. The Earth withholds not its Vital Moiſture, but ſends it forth liberally to all that expect its Nouriſhment. God hath faſtened on all the Creatures not onely a private deſire to ſatisfie the demands of its own Nature, but a general Charity and feeling of Communion as ſociable parts of the Univerſe or Common Body. So that (by reaſon of the mutual Connexion between the Parts) there can be admitted no Confuſion or Divulſion without infinite prejudice to all the Members. Hence if the Body of Nature be like to ſuffer, Natural Agents for a general good will part with their own Properties and Inclinations, and acquaint themſelves with Motions, to which (as to their determinate Qualities) they have even an eſſential Reluctancy. The Air (for inſtance) which naturally mounts upwards, rather than there ſhall be a *Vacuum*, Rupture, or Breach, will deſcend to ſtop that *hiatus*. Man himſelf is a Sociable Creature, born into the world for the good of others; and ſo declared by thoſe who never heard of a *Jeſus*. Not a Member but will hazard it ſelf to preſerve our Bodies: the Hand will be cut off to preſerve the Head from any prejudice, as it is admirably diſcourſed by S. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 12. from the 11th. to the 28th. verſe. And therefore *Menenius Agrippa* well applied the Fable

to

to the *Romans* of the Belly and Members, to ſhew how unnatural a thing it is to nouriſh any private Feuds amongſt themſelves, when the Publick was expoſed to apparent hazards and difficulties. Thus the Law and Light of Nature preach down the ſordid purſuit of a Private Intereſt, and proclaim the Excellency of that Love which *ſeeketh not her own* as moſt heroically generous.

2. This ſinful Self-love excluded as barbarous in my Text is wholly diſcountenanced by the Practice of Gods eminent Scripture Saints, and the Primitive Worthies. *Pardon, O Lord, this thy people, or elſe blot me out of the book of life*, *Exod.* 32. 32. ſo the generous *Moſes*. He had too much in him of a Saint to conſult his own Greatneſs, when it ſtood in competition with the National Intereſt, the general Welfare of Gods People and Servants, he prefers the publick above his own very happineſs. So S. *Paul* (in a zealous Rapture of Ecſtatick Devotion) wiſhed himſelf *accurſed from Chriſt for his brethrens ſake*, (the *Jews*) *his kinſmen after the fleſh*, *Rom.* 9. 3. * Some underſtand it of his readineſs to ſuffer all imaginable Temporal afflictions. Others (as *Calvin*, *Clarius*, *Paræus*, and *Catarinus*) underſtand it with relation to an eternal ſeparation from Gods preſence, upon this ſuppoſition at leaſt, That it would redound more to Gods Glory to ſave the Nation of the *Jews*, than to ſave a ſingle perſon, ſuch an one as the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*. The ſumme is this; * When a Son of *Iſrael* would expreſs the utmoſt of his brotherly kindneſs to the *Jews*, he intituled himſelf to all their miſeries, out of an ardent zele of Gods Glory,

* S. *Hieronymus*, Dr. *Hammond*, *Zegerus*, *Grotius*.

* Mr. *Gregory inter Criticos.*

in

in their Felicities: Let me be their Expiation, or I am in their place to bear their iniquities. And a greater Zele cannot be ſhewed for the promotion of the Publick Intereſt. Thus did *Jeremy* ſympathiſe with *Sion* in the Duſt; and his Book of *Lamentations* is proportionably Tragical with the Churches Afflictions. So Gods People ſate by the Waters of *Babylon* weeping, and hung up their Harps as uſeleſs during the Churches calamity and diſtreſs. *Pſal.*137.1. *Nay, let him take all* (ſaid *Mephiboſheth*) *ſince my Lord the King is returned in peace to his own houſe.* When *David* is reſtored once, he hath no Intereſt to eſpouſe but that of his God and his Prince; 2 *Sam.*19.30. Thus *David* danced for joy at the return of the Ark, ſaying to his taunting Wife, *I will be yet more vile than thus.* *Uriah* could take no complacency in Outward things, when the Ark, and *Iſrael*, and *Judah* abode in Tents; and *Joab* and his Servants were encamped in the open Field. Shall Gods Ark be in danger, and can *Uriah* be ſecure? *As thy ſoul liveth I will not do this thing.* Pardoning the Oath of a Souldier and a Gentleman, it was a moſt Heroically Generous Reſolution; 2 *Sam.* 11.11. Thus the People brought up the Ark of God with the moſt publickly joyful Acclamations, with Shoutings, Cornets, Cymbals, Pſalteries, and Harps; 1 *Chron.* 15.28. Theſe eight Inſtances may ſuffice as to the Generoſity of Gods Scripture Saints, who abominated a ſordid Intereſt, and chiefly deſigned the publick Splendour and Happineſs. I paſs next from the Holy Oracles to the Primitive Times; and I ſhall (to avoid Prolixity) content my ſelf with 5 onely

2 Sam.6.22.

In-

Instances or Presidents, *Clemens*, *Nazianzen*, *Chrysostom*, *Constantine*, and *Paulinus*. *Clemens* (in his famed Epistle to the *Corinthians*, p. 69.) having laboured zelously in the suppression of their many Schisms and Disorders, thus exclaims: *Let any one* (of a Generous Temper) *say that I have occasioned these Feuds and Contentions, I will be gone whersoever you please: onely let the Church be preserved in unity and peace. Throw me* (said *Nazianzen*) *into the Sea to allay the storms, if for my sake there be any tempests in the Church.* (*Vit. Greg. Naz. p.* 1110. *per Gregor. Presbyt.*) So S. *Chrysostom* (*Hom.* 11. on the *Ephesians*) having smartly refuted all the petty Cavils of his Enemies, he turns himself to the People of *Antioch*; *If you suspect these things laid to our charge, we are ready to be gone, to deliver up our power and place; onely let the Churches of Christ be kept in peace.* Such a Generous Soul had the Renowned *Constantine*, witness his passionately zelous Request to the 318 Bishops at the Council of *Nice*, to be at peace amongst themselves in order to the Settlement of the Church. And when some of the Fathers had scattered their Libels and Accusations, he reconciled their Persons first, then he burnt all their Contentious Papers, solemnly protesting that their Ecclesiastical Ruptures were more fatal to him than any Wars, and created to him greater Troubles than all the other Affairs of his Empire and Territories. But that of *Paulinus* (mentioned by Saint *Gregory* in his *Dialogues*) will rather find Admirers than Followers. Having spent his whole Estate in the Redemption of Captives, a poor Woman begs as much Money as would ransom her onely Son a

Euseb. de vita Constantini. Theod. hist. l. 1. c. 11. p. 25.

Slave to the *Vandals*; he freely gives himself into a voluntary Slavery to release him from that Vassallage. So prevalent a Generosity with the Prince of that Countrey, that he not onely gave Liberty to *Paulinus*, but at his instance released all the Christian Captives. Thus the Scripture Saints and Primitive Hero's scorned the pursuit of a Contracted Interest, and Self-love is preached down by the Generous Charity of Christs true Disciples.

3. The Self-love condemned in the Text is so horrid a wickedness, that it dares not appear in its own colours. If *Absalom* have a design to raise his Honour upon the ruine of his Father and his Sovereign, he hath a Vow to perform at *Hebron*; and from him all our Rebels since have cloked their Sedition under the notion of Religion and Liberties, 2 *Sam.* 15. 4. Thus [Stand and deliver] is the same thing with [the High Court of Justice,] and the Saints who sequestered and seized our Possessions and Estates, against the Laws of God and his Anointed, were the Keepers of our Liberties by Authority of Parliament. Thus the new Pharisees pray *ex tempore*, and devour their Neighbours; and Self-love is sheltered under a Self-denying Ordinance; and such who would swallow up the pitiful remainders of the Churches Patrimony and Revenues, cry out for purer Ordinances and Administrations. The Trafficking Godly are more concerned than ever *Julian* the Apostate, that the Son of *Mary* should be served in Plate, and are as ready to rob the Altars of God, as His Holiness (so called) to give away the Kingdoms of an Heretick. Yet these very men pretend to groan for-

sooth

sooth for the Power and Purity of Gospel Worship. What a glorious Exchange would a spacious Cathedral make. How sweetly might a Mechanick live in the Palace of a Prelate? When a Separating Brother presents a Bible to my Hand, and a Sword to my Heart, *Scriptum est, The meek shall inherit the Earth.* What then signifies the Great Charter or the Petition of Right? *Dominus nobiscum, God with us*, was the Motto of the Coin in *Engl.* when this Ancient Kingdom became a ridiculous Commonwealth. When the disloyal Subject fights for Pay against the Princes Good Conscience, he onely fights to deliver him from his Evil Counsellors, and to bring him back again to his Parliament and Kingdom. 'Tis for His Majesty's Preservation that they seize all his Forts and Castles; 'tis the Lords Cause and Gospel Reformation for which Five Members and *Kimbolton* involved three flourishing Kingdoms in Bloud and Confusions, for which they purchased the Title of Patriots, and the Assertors of our Privileges. The Solemn League was to be taken with Self-humbling, Self-denying, Self-abasing Hearts; which was founded wholly in Ambition and Covetousness, and had no other publick Vindicators than the Aspiring *Diotrephes*, or the Sneaking *Demetrius*, (for so we are told by the greatest Observer of their Projects, and the most Glorious Sufferer under their most Barbarous Cruelties.) The main Reformation intended is the Debasing of Prelats, and the Robbing the Church of its Lands and Revenues. 'Tis the Vineyard makes *Naboth* guilty and fit to die still, I see; while the breath of Religion fills the Sails, Profit

Charles I. Εἰκὼν Βασιλικὴ.

and Interest are the Compass by which all these steer their Course in all Seditious Commotions. If a Gentleman have a Son that looks as piercing as School-subtilty, and as thin as a Piece of Metaphysicks; if he be fit for nothing, he is then consecrated to the Service of the Church, and does doubtless expect now Gods blessing upon all his Fortunes, having given him his Son to be his Priest. But why then is the young Divinity Intender left wholly to the bare hopes of Church Preferment, whilest the whole Estate goes sweeping away to the Heir for the Immortality of their Families? Thus under the notion of promoting Gods Honour they do very sagely design onely themselves and a private Interest.

Thus New Lights (as the Author of *The Decay of Christian Piety* well notes) lead men to their Neighbours Coffers. Powerful Teachers coin at once Opinions for their Disciples, and Money for themselves: and the second Baptism of the *Munster* Anabaptists was a solemn espousing of the World renounced in the first. *Let your moderation be known unto all men*, is the great Text of our men of Moderate Principles, who at the same time that they are lukewarm in the things of God and the Church, (which they christen a Prudential Compliance) are most passionate pursuers of a Private Interest. They are for a Moderation in Principles, but however *by this craft we have our wealth*, *Acts* 19.25. is the onely Rule they proceed by in all their practises.

Thus our Moderation is a base Compliance for a Secular advantage. This sort of Moderation is no other than a *Dutch* kind of Traffick and Commerce,

merce, and kept up by a sort of Mechanical Preachers, with whom the Salary is more Sacred than all Canonical Obligations. Thus by an unhappy Inversion the Tabernacle is become a Covering for the Goats, and the Levite makes Merchandize of the People's Souls, and at the same time exposeth to sale not onely his Mother Church, but his own very Conscience and Engagements.

Thus Self-love hath many Servants, but no open Patrons. They that take it into their bosoms, throw it again out of their doors. It dares not appear in its own colours.

4. Self-love is repugnant to the true Christian Charity founded in two Fundamental Articles, *the holy Catholick Church*, and *the Communion of Saints*. Propriety is a kind of Excommunication in this case. We do thrust our Brethren (in effect at least) out of the Church, whilest we appropriate our Love and Devotion wholly to our selves.

Hence the Holy Ghost hath married together *the Communion of Saints* and *the Communication of Affections*. 'Tis a good Note of *John Calvin* upon that of *David*, *Oh pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, *Psal.* 22. 6. That he who will pray aright, must not confine himself to a Sect or a Conclave, but *ut Dominus totum Ecclesiæ corpus conservet*; he must be concerned for the Church Catholick, and every Member thereof. For the City of *Rome* (if *Ptolemy* be consulted) is not the whole World; and there is a Church no doubt out of the Walls of *Donatus* the Schismatick. What agreement hath Mammon with God? Self-love with a Church Catholick? a Private Interest with the Communion Ephes. 4. 16.

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of Saints. *As the body is one, and hath many members, and those members of the body being many are one body: so also is Christ.* 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. 'Tis a sordid Self-Interest sits in the Chair of *Rome*, and is superintendent of our new Presbyteries, and the sole Oracle of the Congregational Churches, with whom Gain is Godliness. This is no more consistent with *the Catholick Church*, and *the Communion of Saints*, than Fighting for Reformation with the Primitive Sufferings. To adhere onely to a Sect in Religion is no Communion, but a Combination. 'Tis either S. *Basils concors odium*, or S. *Augustines unitas contra unitatem*, as the Renowned Bishop *Laud* hath observed; rather a bandying against the Church it self, than an endeavour to preserve it. They destroy the Publick, who restrain to a Party onely of their own gang the Title of Brotherhood: as if *God, I thank thee, &c.* did onely qualifie men for Communion with the Saviour of the World, who is the great President of Humility to all Mankind, and especially to those that believe.

This Self-seeking Partiality is the bane of the Churches Peace: not onely *England*, but all Christendom, groans under the burthen of its many Schisms and Contentions. He that cannot drive on his own Private Projects, and proclaim his Zele for the Lord of Hosts, both at once, hath neither studied Men nor the Times, but onely Books, say our politickly-reserved Persons; who make the best use of their Religion, that is to say, the best advantage. But these Politick Professors, who never shew themselves but at half-lights, who never un-

unveils himſelf in publick, but where he is ſure of Protection and Countenance; who is reſolved that Chriſtianity ſhall never croſs with his Secular Intereſts, for his Religion ſhall ſtoop to theſe, whom all ſides are deceived in if they take them to be wholly theirs: Theſe men had need that one teach them again which be the firſt Principles; for they have forgotten *the Catholick Church*, and *the Communion of Saints*. Without a right underſtanding of both which we vainly flatter our ſelves in the Title of Chriſtians, or pretend an Intereſt in the Holy Jeſus.

It was a phancy of *Plato's*, that the moſt pure and active Souls deſcended from Heaven to Earth, and there aſſumed Human Bodies, onely to be beneficial to the Publick Intereſt. With the Fiction I have nought to do, but I infer hence, that Nature taught the Heathens a Publick-ſpirited Generoſity, which we are ſo blinded as not to learn of ſuch a Maſter, *in whom are all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge*. Nature was more prevalent with theſe than Religion with us, to our juſt ſhame and reproach. They acted more generouſly who never heard of a *Jeſus*, than we, whom our Chriſtianity does every way oblige to be men of Publick Souls and moſt Heroical Reſolutions.

This then is the fourth Particular, the Purſuit onely of our Private Intereſts is oppoſite to two of the Creed Articles, *the Catholick Church*, and *the Communion of Saints*, and contrary to that Love *which ſeeketh not her own*; the grand Character of Chriſts true Diſciples. A very pregnant Demonſtration of the Sordidneſs of Self-love, which

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the Generosity of Charity does exclude in the Text.

5. Self-love (excluded here by the generous Charity of Christs Disciples) is preached down by the Doctrine and Practice of our onely *Jesus*. His Doctrine runs thus; *Love one another as I have loved you*, *John* 15.12. Now the Love of Christ reached to *all men* in general, 1 *Tim.* 4.10. to *every man* in particular, *Heb.* 2.9. to *all the world* without exception, 1 *John* 2.2. without exception of the *ungodly*, *Rom.* 5.6. without exception of Enemies, *Rom.* 5.10. or of *them that perish*, such who *deny the Lord that bought them*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. So intensively great was our Saviours Love, that he became περιλυπος, (say the Evangelists) *a circle of calamities*, an Island in his own Inundation of Bloud, Sweat, and Tears, to redeem and save us. Beloved, if Christ so loved us as to die for us, we ought also to love and die for the Brethren, that is, for their Salvation: and this excludes that sordid Self-love that now governs the World, and hath a fatal influence upon the Church and Commonwealth.

And so I pass to the included Positive, That true Love is of that Generous nature, it will do good to all; it takes in whatsoever will advantage our Neighbours; and under our Neighbours are included also Enemies. *Love seeketh not her own.* Love is not confined to it self alone, but is of a Publick Spirit; a Generous Grace, that respects others as well as our selves, and quits its Private Interest for the General Happiness. And thus the words are equivalent to those of our Saviour, *We must love our neighbours as our selves.* Of which briefly.

briefly. But *Who is my neighbour?* The *Jews* of the Synagogue looked upon none as their *brother* or *neighbour* but onely a *Jew*. And the *Pharisees* expounded, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* By the first they cut off all Mankind but a *Jew* or a Proselyte: by the second the *Jews* themselves did not perform due Civilities, no not to a *Jew*, if an Enemie, upon any account whatsoever. But our Saviour hath fully decided this point; *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, Mat.* 8. 44. Hence *Castalio* (*Rom.* 13. 9.) reads for Neighbour πλησιον, *Alterum*, any man with whom we have or may have to do, is our Neighbour. Strangers that we never saw before, Enemies that our corrupt Nature may probably wish never to see again, they are our Neighbours and our Brethren. The *Phylacteries* of the *Pharisees* were broad enough and wide, but their Expositions scant enough, and their Practises as narrow as their Comment, by which Strangers and Enemies were excluded: but we *have not so learned Christ* and his Truth. We must (indeed we may and ought to) preferve a Brother before a Kinsman, a Kinsman before a Countryman, a Countryman before an Alien; but yet so that the beams of our Love may scatter themselves throughout the whole World by a general affection to all Mankind. Love seeking not her own, includes every man that issued from *Adam*, especially those of the Christian Profession; and even amongst them the most Eminent and Exemplary for sound Piety and Devotion. *God hath made of one bloud all the nations of the earth, Acts* 17. 26. All Angels have indeed the same Intellectual Nature one with another, but

they did not all come from one Angel, but were severally and immediately created: whereas God made but one Man, and out of him all the Race came, and so all Brethren: *Fratres jure naturæ matris unius*; so *Tertullian*. To this of Nature we are to adde *Identitas societatis*; we are alike Fellow-Citizens of the great Corporation of the World, and so designed for the benefit of all Mankind. Again, there is *Identitas professionis*; thus as Christians we have all one God and Saviour, one Redeemer and Sanctifier, one Faith, one Baptism, one Supper, one Bread, and one Body; and therefore should have but one Heart, and one Soul, with the multitude of Believers, *Act.* 4. 32. especially labouring for the same Eternal Reward, where Love is no small part of our Felicities. The summe is this, Love seeking not her own *does good to all, but especially to the houshold of faith*, *Gal.* 6. 10. it loves all mankind, but *especially the brotherhood*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 17. Hence 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. it is said, *Adde to your brotherly kindness charity*; the one relating to all men, and the other to the men of the same Christian Profession; so *Erasmus* and *Grotius* upon that Text.

Tertul. Apol. c. 39.

And thus I have given you the full importance of the words, *viz.* Christian Charity is so Heroical a Grace, that it never pursues a Private to the prejudice of the Publick Interest, seeking the benefit of all men, Friends and Enemies, but especially the peace and happiness of the Catholick Church, and every Individual Member of the Body of Christ.

Let us now make Application to our selves.

1. Learn we hence in our Places and Callings le-

legally and orderly to promote the Splendour of the State, and the Prosperity of the Church above all our petty Projects tending to a sordid Interest.

I say Legally, for I understand not Popular Tumults in the Cause of *Jesus Christ*. I am neither for pulling down the Temple to build any mans Wall, nor for pulling down the House of the Subject for to repair the breaches of the Temple. Religion is the best reason of State. It is therefore no policy to say of the Church, *Down with it, down with it, even to the ground.* On the other side, Christ never intended such a Fanatical Fifth-Monarchy, as shall destroy the Kingdoms of the World. I approve the keeping the Swine out of mens own Inclosures well enough, but that may be done (I hope) without turning them all into the Lords Vineyard. Love which seeketh not her own, will carefully avoid it, as detrimental to the Publick, in which every mans Private Security is involved.

The Papists say (neither minding our Arguments nor their own Divisions) that we have no Unity, and so no Church: Let us not give them a just cause to say, we have no Commonwealth neither, for want of Unity; in endeavouring to preserve the Laws and Religion against all Forein and Domestick Seditious Invaders and Opposers. But, my Brethren, since *Pilat* and *Herod* are Friends against Christ, *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* joyned against *Judah*, Pope and Sectary in Union at least against the Publick Interest of Prince and Church, however disagreeing otherwise among themselves; let us be

equally unanimous (but in orderly ways) for the National Happiness. The Charity of my Text does not lay *Sion* in the dust to secure a Personal Interest. The Peace of Church and State is encircled one in another; he that disturbs one, hazards both; those who make a division here, design the ruine, not the welfare, either of Church or Commonwealth. Charity (which *seeketh not her own*) is never the Author of any such Advice, by which the State-breaches are repaired by the Ruines of the Church; which is never like to recover (once impoverished) in such an Age as this, wherein mens Charity is so cold, and their Devotion so illiberal. On the other side, should the Disturbers of a State pretend that they endeavour the Peace of the Church, we are to look on them as the Troublers of both, which God hath conjoyned, and which are no sooner divorced than destroyed.

Let us then be as Zelous to suppress Schism or Sedition in Legal ways, as ever any Schismatick or Sectary was disorderly active and busie to promote it. What should hinder the regular Priest from being as Zelous to preach Peace and Obedience, as ever any Son of Thunder to Libel the Anointed of the Lord, to preach Swords, or to curse *Meroz?* Why should not our Magistrates be as careful to preserve the Established Laws and Liberties, and at once to secure the Grandeur of the Prince and the Publick Tranquillities, as any Dissenters ever were, or now are, to reduce all things to the most sordid Confusions? God forbid that I should press any man to a Persecution of truly Tender Consciences; but I distinguish between the Execution of our *English*

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Laws and the Persecution of the Righteous. And I ground this Distinction upon that Excellent Sentence of *Charles* the Martyr, in that Heavenly Book which he composed in his Solitude and Sufferings. The words are these: *None but such as drive on their Ambitious or Covetous Designs over the ruine of Prince, Peers, and People, can desire a greater freedom than is allowed by the Laws of* England, *whose bounds evil men may call their manacles and oppression, but all good men ever esteemed their protection and ornament. He therefore that despiseth the rule and direction of the Law of the Land, justly forfeits the reward and benefit, deservedly losing his own safety by seeking an unreasonable liberty to himself.* You see hence (Beloved) that the Magistrate may as reasonably punish, as any Subject can pretend that he rationally disobeys the present Government. There are indeed a sort of Pleasant men who tell us, if we let the Dissenters alone to themselves, they will in time destroy one another, and perish by their own very Factions and Confusions. I grant the thing to be probable at least; but if hence they would infer a non-execution of the Laws, the Heroical Charity of the Text will by no means allow of the Consequence. For I do not doubt but the Wilde Beasts left together in an open place would tear and worry one another to pieces, but never (Beloved) till they have first devoured their Keepers. So when these have laid their Governours at the feet of the Precious, they will no doubt fight out the Truth of Religion amongst themselves. So that the summe total of this sage Advice is briefly this; to persuade the Prince and his Deputies to give up their

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own Lives *gratis*, to make preparation thereby to destroy their Adversaries. Will these Gentlemen be pleased first to practise this State-conclusion upon themselves? Will they hang awhile by their Necks, to shew the Sons of the Church, and the Loyal Subjects of the Prince, the way to the Gallows? At such a pleasant rate do some men discourse, who think themselves the onely men of Prudence and Holiness. If the Sectary beg an Alms, Charity (which seeketh not her own) will most readily give it; but he shall beg till he is tongue-tied before it be granted that he hath the Truth on his side, or that he is persecuted for righteousness sake. For let them speak without blushing, and then tell me, whether an Act of Oblivion, the Gospel, and the Freedom of Trade and Commerce, and all the variety that Sea or Land affords, can amount to a Persecution of these People of the Lord. It may be they account themselves persecuted when (like little Children) they scratch and kick and bite, and cry out all the while as if themselves were killed. In this case a Generous Love will not gratifie them with the perturbation of the Laws either in Church or State, because herein the Publick Welfare and Interest is involved.

A single Locust (saith Bishop *Laney* in a Sermon at the Court) is no such perillous Beast to be feared or regarded; but if they come in sholes and swarms, and cover the face of the Earth, they are no small Plague to the Countrey where they light. Thus take a Sectary single by himself, he ought doubtless to be tenderly dealt with; and a Generous

rous Charity will be very compassionate; but when once formed into a Faction, and incorporated into a Sect, giving forth new Laws of Government and Worship, Charity (*seeking not her own*) is too much a Friend to the Publick, to suffer these Locusts to devour the Land.

But they say, Religion should be Free. I grant that, 'tis no Religion else; but then all Vertue, and all Acts of Obedience, should be Free likewise. But, must we therefore mure up *Westminster* Hall, sheath the Sword of Justice, and open all the Prison-doors? Must the Subjects Conscience stop all the Proceedings at the Kings Bench, and Christian Liberty issue out a Prohibition to the Courts of Exchequer and Common Pleas, and remove all Actions to the Chancery of every mans Breast? Certainly the High Commission and Star-Chamber (formerly declaimed against and laid aside) could never amount to the thousandth part of that mischief, as to permit the Schismatick Conscience (which in this case is his private Judgment or Opinion, and nothing else) to be both Pope and Emperour, at once invested with a greater Power than His Majesty does duly challenge, and His Holiness usurps. If the Brethren of the Long Robe are infected with this Leven, and desirous that such a Liberty be indulged to the tenderest Dissenters, I onely desire to know why themselves do not read in all the Statute Books People for Prince, for Law Conscience, for National Customs the Interpretation of Private Spirits? Why they do not turn *Secundùm Angliæ leges & consuetudines* into *Schismaticorum conscientias*? At this rate

farewel Judge and Jury, and Writs and Proceſs; for ſuch as fear God are onely bound to obey themſelves. Certainly a Generous Charity, that eſpouſeth the Common Intereſt, muſt needs look upon this new Device as equally miſchievous and ridiculous.

But the Diſſenters are weak Chriſtians, Babes in Chriſt, and tender Conſciences. Why, truly if weak and infirm, and Babes, then they are very unfit to be truſted with themſelves, far more unfit to chuſe their own Guides; for the weak will be apt to chuſe very Ignorant Leaders, and *if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch. I underſtand not that weakneſs* (ſaith a Reverend Biſhop) *which will not ſubmit to the conduct of the Laws and Superiours.* For Blind men to refuſe to be led, for the Sick to refuſe to be ruled by their Phyſicians, is not Weakneſs but Wilfulneſs, does not ſo much ſpeak us Tender Conſciences, as Head-ſtrong Profeſſors. I do indeed allow any one the Plea of Weakneſs, till he erect an Altar againſt the Church, and impudently will correct the Publick Laws and Conſtitutions; but for ſuch an one to plead Weakneſs and Tenderneſs, calls to my memory a ſturdy ſort of Beggars, who, to avoid the Statute of Vagrants, and the Penalty of a Whipping Poſt, carry their Arms in a ſtring, making it ſerve as a kind of Patent to excuſe their Idleneſs. But allow them to be Weak, ſhall their Weakneſs (which is at beſt a Negative, at worſt a wilful Ignorance) give Law to all our Kings and Parliaments, and Convocations? The Child will cry and be diſquieted, muſt he therefore govern the Houſe, muſt the Crowned

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and Mitered Heads give up all their strength to the Babes in Christ? This is even as the Emperour to his men, *Putas tibi injuriam fieri nisi imperas?* Do not all Schisms and Heresies (pretending Christianity) quote Scripture for themselves? Does any man ever quote a Text for his Assertions, but he would be thought at least to be touched in Conscience? What Law of man can ever be so firmly made, against which Conscience may not be pretended, where men once resolve to unhinge the Government, and in order to that to be perpetually disobedient? Either then let the Dissenter keep his Conscience peaceably to himself, or otherwise Christian Charity, which *seeketh not her own*, will not suffer him to disturb the Church and Commonwealth.

As for instance I will give you three plain Cases in the Contest between the *English* Laws and the Subjects Conscience, and refer the decision to all unprejudiced persons. It is written you know *Rom.*13. and it is a Branch of the Law of *England*, That it is not lawful upon any pretences to take up Arms against the King. Must I now govern my self and actions by Scripture and the Laws, or must I execute the Popes sentence with the Jesuitically Conscientious? Or may I fight against *Charles* the Second under the late Covenant Standard of Religion and Libertie? Shall Providence appearing in extraordinary ways cancel all my Oaths of Allegeance, and break all my publick Obligations with the sage Oracle of the Congregational Churches? Shall I resist Authority with the *Munster* Anabaptists, because it is written *Kings of Nations?* or pull down all Authority in Church

and State (with the Quaking Sect) because it is said, *Call no man your Master upon earth?* Shall I fight against Prince *Charles* in behalf of King *Jesus* with the Fifth Monarchy Zelots? This is the Case. The first is a Rule in Scripture and the Laws of *England*. The second, the Plea of Conscience, grounded upon the Interpretation of a Private Spirit. Is it a question which way the Charity of my Text is inclined in the present Debate? Remember that it *seeketh not her own*, and it will preserve unquestionably the Interest of the Publick above all the Specious pretences of the Religiously Disobedient. Again secondly, the Papist is forbidden (under the Censure of Excommunication) to be present at the Reading of the Common Prayers of the Church of *England*, who may be present without that Censure at our Sermons in publick. The Sectary absents himself from the same Service, as if it were the Mass Book. The one avoids it as prohibited by the Pope, the other because it is Popish forsooth dares not approach it. The Laws of *England* authorize it as a Liturgy Reformed, fit for the Reformed Church of *England*. This is the Case, Beloved; and I presume moderately stated.

Charity seeking not her own demands in the Case thus stated, whether all the Acts of Uniformity must be laid aside, or (which is the same thing) not executed, till His Holiness of *Rome*, and the Kirk of *Scotland*, and the Saints of *New England*, and every other Sect by whom Conscience is pretended, do all agree in the same Forms of Worship. 'Tis a ready way to prevent sin indeed, thus to evacuate the Laws of the Land: but at the

ſame time there will be no Government. A very excellent way for the Happineſs of the Publick. But Chriſtian Love is too Generous a Grace to underſtand and endure it.

Thirdly, tell the whining Sectary, that the King or Church do command, Conſcience is afraid of ſinning againſt God. Tell the ſame *Diſſenter*, that God requires this Obedience to the Powers by himſelf ordained; here you may thruſt a Needle, and he feels it not. *His Conſcience* (ſaith a Reverend Prelat) *hath always a dead palſie on one ſide.* If the Sectary will call this a Conſcience againſt which he ought not to act, who can help it? But Charity is of too Generous a ſpirit to ſuffer ſuch a Conſcience to give Law to the Eſtabliſhed Church and Commonwealth. Keep your Opinion modeſtly to your ſelf, but your Fancy and Humour, your Prejudices or Intereſt, ſhall neither tie up the hands of the Magiſtrate, nor give Law to the Subject. *Quicunque vult* is a ſtrange Preface to the Laws of *England*, and puts no difference between the Regular and Diſobedient. If any difference, this laſt hath the preheminence; for he not onely diſobeys without Puniſhments, but is thought the more Conſcientious for his very Stubbornneſs.

It is well obſerved by a late Reverend Prelat, (now with God) That the aim of theſe men that trouble *Iſrael* is firſt to break the Unity, and then the whole Body. They will ſpeak for Unity as other men, but they are ſtill buſie about the Knot that ties up Unity in peace. There is ſomething wrings them there. They will pretend it is good there ſhould be *vinculum*, ſome Bond to oblige

men to Obedience; O (say they) God forbid else. But they would not have the Knot too hard; that is, when they are to be bound themselves, not when they have power to oblige others. Others will tell you, they would not untie the Knot, but onely turn it on the other side, because it lies uneasily in this. But this is a mere shift in the Carnal Politicks. Turn the Knot how you please, it will be perpetually grievous, if it bind them to Obedience. Others will untie the Knot, but not leave it loose; tie it otherwise, but bind it as fast. Trust not this pretence. Their meaning is to tie up Unity in a Bow-knot, which they may slip at one end as they list themselves. But let their pretences be never so specious, if they be nice and curious about the Knot, then Charity (which *seeketh not her own* to the prejudice of the Common Interest) will look to their Fingers, and the Bond of Peace likewise. 'Tis the language of Pride to Disobedience, *Come, let us break the bonds.* What now remains, but that our Magistrates assume a Publick Spirit, such a Zele for our Religion, Laws and Government, as the most daring Sinner (the tender Conscience it self so much pretended) may not have the confidence to affront. 'Tis not an Oath *pro forma*, attended with Fees, Feasting and Musick, and the external Pageantries and Formalities of a Court, which makes a Magistrate truly renowned; though these things are also requisite to preserve a Respect: but 'tis the execution of Justice and Judgment in the Land; not a *Gallio*-like Moderation, a prudential Indifference what becomes of the Government in Church or State. He that breaths fresh life into a lan-

languishing Statute, the Generations to come will *rise up and call him blessed.* Let him moderate his Passions of Anger and Desire in the Name of God. It becomes a man girt with *Cæsars* Sword to avoid a sordid Covetousness, and a proud Wrath; but what has his Worship to do to moderate the just and reasonable Laws of his Prince or his God? than which no more perfidious or disingenuous Cruelty can be acted upon the Publick. To moderate a Passion becomes the Generous Text Love; but Charity seeking not her own looks upon the Execution as the best, and indeed the onely tolerable Comment upon a Penal Statute. They say in Physick, *An error in the first Concoction is not mended in the second.* An Excess in the Law (as the Generous Charity does interpret) is very ill cured by an Arbitrary Partiality in the Execution thereof. 'Tis for King, Lords and Commons to say, *Be it Enacted*; Charity (espousing the Publick) will see it duly executed. The Inferiour Officer (His Majesties Lieutenant) is neither to explain nor amend it.

To conclude; this single Text, *Charity seeketh not her own*, is (under God seasonably applied) the only way to settle this divided Nation. For, if Charity be allowed to comment upon our many Divisions, there will soon be a fair Understanding. Such as cry up *Templum Domini, the Temple of the Lord*, not minding the State; such who cry up Trade, and not the Temple of the Lord, this Christian Love unites, and makes them one, by representing to them, that the Church and State are but one *Jerusalem*, and so their onely Splendour is in a firm Conjunction. If Clouds arise between the

Prince

Prince and the People, under Heaven onely the Text Love can ſcatter them; for Love will make the People ſtudy to be quiet, and to do their own buſineſs; to bleſs God and the King for their excellent Laws and Immunities; and Charity makes the Sovereign treat his People as Subjects, not as Slaves, and will not permit any unhappy Contention between Prerogative and Privileges; or at leaſt will reconcile them ſo as moſt contributes to the National Advantage.

If ſuch as are ſummoned to conſult of the Grand Affairs of a Church and a Nation, ſhould any way claſh in their Debates and Conſultations, and when they meet to ſettle all things fall into Parties, Charity (which *ſeeketh not her own*) reconciles their Differences, by demonſtrating the neceſſity of laying aſide all Private Feuds when the Publick is expoſed to any hazards or difficulties. If any man leaves the Publick Aſſemblies, upon the account onely of advancing thereby a Private Intereſt, a Generous Charity will recall him from ſo ſordid a Self-love, by repreſenting that the man that went down from *Jeruſalem* to *Jericho* fell among the Thieves; *Had he* (ſaith S. *Auguſtine*) *not gone down from God and his Church, he had eſcaped the Robbers*, *Luke* 10.30. If any man of whatſoever Quality or Condition be ſo addicted to his own Private State, as to neglect the Publick, a Generous Love recalls him, by repreſenting that he is void of the ſenſe of Piety, and in vain wiſheth Happineſs to himſelf; for whoſoever he be, he muſt live in the body of the Church and Commonwealth, and how can he be ſafe if theſe be either troubled or divided? If

men

men should so far prefer Trade above the Religion of *Jesus Christ*, as to deliver up their Bibles to a Pagan Prince, and declare themselves not *Christians* but *Hollanders*; and if the People of *England* should be enamoured of such an *Amsterdam* Hotchpotch, and the base Alloy of the United Provinces, who are at unity onely in the pursuit of Traffick and Commerce, not of Truth and Holiness: Charity, which *seeketh not her own*, will reduce them to a due temperament, and represent to their considerations, that *Agur's* Prayer, *Give us, O Lord, neither poverty nor riches*, is the best Prayer for the three Kingdoms; for it is an Eternal Truth of Gods Word, that we *cannot serve God and Mammon* at once: and it was the case of *Tyrus*, *By the multitude of thy merchandizes thou hast increased thine iniquities*, *Ezek.* 27, 28. Chapters: and therefore our Saviour, the Great President of this Heroick Love in the Text, hath taught us to say, *Give us this day our daily bread*; which I presume (whatever be the *Dutch* Commerce) does not signifie Superfluity, no not in the *Dutch* Annotations. Thus a Generous Disinterested Charity takes men off from Sects and Parties to espouse the common Cause, as it is Gods, the Kings, the States, and the Churches.

So again in the great case of Church Reformation, we have hitherto answered the Demand, Where was your Church before *Luther?* It was (we say) where it now is, the same Church Reformed, which was before decayed and depraved. Nor can we answer otherwise till we renounce our Creed and a Church Catholick. If therefore our Dissenters will propose (peaceably) no other Reformation than

than what is bounded within the Faith and Laws of the Church Catholick, we understand their meaning well enough; but if they have a Fancy that they cannot reform, unless they innovate or extirpate, then the Generosity of Christian Love will not permit it, distinguishing (as of right she ought) between the Catholick Rules by which National Churches are best reformed, and the late Self-interested and Ridiculous Reformation according to the Covenant. I say, in point of Christian Charity, Conference for satisfaction of the peaceably Disaffected is Forbearance enough, and in some cases very requisite and expedient: but it must then be seasonably provided that the Peace of the State run no hazard by a Religious Dispute; the Sacredness of the Law must be inviolably observed; Authority must not be contemned, because it hath graciously condescended; for then Love *seeking not her own*, but the Publick, does rationally disclaim and generously oppose it. Reformation (Beloved) is the restoring of what was decayed, not the introducing of that which was not, much less an Extirpation of the Regular Establishment. When men usurp their Private Meetings to keep the people at the greater distance from being reduced to the Laws of the Church and State, their pretence is not to be obnoxious to the Law for violating it, but to make the Law obnoxious to themselves by reforming it; as Experience hath too sadly testified. Will that Christian Charity which hath Wisdom for its Guide, allow such an Insolence against Authority, to have a share in the Government? Is it reasonable indeed that the Presbyterian

an ſhould be gratified in his Comprehenſive Project, who by an unabjured Oath hath obliged himſelf to root out the Order of Biſhops out of the Churches of *Great Britain* and *Ireland?* What Security can they give the State of ſtanding to their own Comprehenſive miſchief, with whom the Oath of Allegeance hath been leſs Sacred than the Covenant? Charity, which *ſeeketh not her own*, is not ſo far blind, as to admit ſuch unexperienced Devices for the Intereſt of the Publick. It may be allowed a Phyſician in a caſe truly deſperate, to try a project upon the body of a ſingle perſon for the advantage of his Art; but it is not altogether ſo allowable to practiſe at this rate upon the Body Politick, to try any new Concluſions upon the Church and Commonwealth, leſt the Cure of the Schiſm be merely Palliative, and the Effect Eradicative of the Regular Government.

It is to be ſeen in *Cambdens* Annals, that when the Recuſants forbore coming to the Churches Prayers, at the ſame time aroſe this Party, either calling themſelves, or called by others, by the Name of *Puritans*. Ever ſince that time the Embers have been raked up in deceitful aſhes, ſtill moſt appearing when the State was moſt ſollicitous. At length this very Bleſſed and Godly Party rebelled againſt *Charles* the Firſt, and prevailing in thoſe Arms became divided into the ſeveral Parties now united in the Plea for Tender Conſciences. The Laws recovering again of courſe by the Return of *Charles* the Second to his Throne and Right, theſe Tender and Sweet-natur'd Rebels demand now a Law to juſtifie that which in point of fact they have illegally

gally usurped. The pretence is, that not only the *English* Laws, but Christianity it self cannot clear up their Scruples so long cherished and entertained, against which should they proceed, they say they are damned. To this we say, that Conferences for their satisfaction have been frequently permitted, there is no reason that more should be granted, lest the Government run a hazard under the notion of Reformation-work, which a Publick-spirited Love does no way countenance or tolerate.

In short; the Publick-spirited and most Generously Charitable man is the best Moderator of all our Civil and Religious Controversies and Disputes, the best President of all the Councils, Synods, and Convocations of the Church, the best Penman and Interpreter of all our Parliamentary Statutes, the best Bishop that can govern a Diocese, the best Priest that can be set over a Parish, the best Counsellor of a Prince, the best Justice to preserve the publick Peace, the most Regular Son of the *English* Church, and the most Loyal Subject in point of Allegeance, and the most glorious Saint in the highest Heavens. And so God Almighty give his blessing to the present Discourse.

FINIS.

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